



Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
801 North First Street, Room 400
San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number:
P.C. 5/20/02 Item:

File Number:
GP02-03-03a

Council District and SNI Area:
3 – Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace

Major Thoroughfares Map Number:
83

Assessor's Parcel Number(s):
472-01-031; -033; -034

Project Manager: Lesley Xavier

GENERAL PLAN REPORT

2002 Spring Hearing

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

General Plan amendment request to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram from Light Industrial with Mixed Industrial Overlay and Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) to Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC).

LOCATION: South side of E. William Street, approximately 360 feet west of McLaughlin Avenue

ACREAGE: 13.0

APPLICANT/OWNER:

HMH, Inc./Union Pacific Railroad Company

GENERAL PLAN LAND USE / TRANSPORTATION DIAGRAM DESIGNATION:

Existing Designation: Light Industrial with Mixed Industrial Overlay; Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

Proposed Designation: Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

EXISTING ZONING DISTRICT(S): LI (Light Industrial)

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION(S):

North: Single-family residential - Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC); Light Industrial

South: Vacant land, Interstate 280, railroad tracks - Public Park/Open Space

East: Industrial/commercial building, McKinley Neighborhood School, vacant land, and single-family residential - Light Industrial; Public/Quasi-Public; Public Park/Open Space; Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

West: Single-family residential - Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS:

A Negative Declaration was adopted on April 22, 2002.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC)

Approved by:
Date:

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

CITY DEPARTMENT AND PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED:

- **Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services (PRNS)** – If this amendment is approved, development should proceed concurrently with the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) land use proposals for this site including the possibility of the construction of multi-use trails along the railroad property if the rail line is abandoned, or dedicating parkland on the parcel west of and adjacent to Martin Park. Future development of the site may create impacts to Martin Park and should be designed with an appropriate interface with the park.
- **Department of Transportation** – The amendment request underwent a traffic analysis and it was determined that the estimated number of p.m. peak hour trips did not exceed the significant impact threshold of 1.5%. Therefore, the proposed project is exempt from further long-term traffic analysis and is projected to have an insignificant impact.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE:

- None received.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This is a privately initiated General Plan amendment to change the Land Use/Transportation Diagram designation from Light Industrial with Mixed Industrial Overlay to Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) on a 13-acre site located on the south side of E. William Street, approximately 360 feet west of McLaughlin Avenue, along the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. The requested land use designation would allow for approximately 141 dwelling units on the subject site, assuming a density of 10.8 dwelling units per acre.

BACKGROUND**Site and Surrounding Uses**

The amendment site is located on the south side of E. William Street, approximately 360 feet west of McLaughlin Avenue. The existing uses of the site are the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and vacant land. Uses surrounding the site include single-family residential and some light industrial uses to the north, an industrial/commercial building, the McKinley Neighborhood School, vacant land for the future Martin Park, and single-family residential uses to the east, Interstate 280 and vacant land to the south, and single-family residential to the west.

The General Plan land use designations surrounding the site include Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC), Public/Quasi-Public, Public Parks/Open Space, and Light Industrial. The Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) designation reflects the existing single-family homes located to the east and west of the site. The Public/Quasi-Public designation reflects the McKinley Neighborhood School and the Public Parks/Open Space reflects the undeveloped Martin Park. The Light Industrial is located towards the north of the site and on the northeastern side of the site. This designation reflects the industrial buildings that house the Level III Major Freight Systems, RB Enterprises,



Looking south at the amendment site with the Interstate 280 crossing over the site and defining the southern boundary.

and RGM Transport. The Light Industrial designation to the north reflects the continuation of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace SNI Area

The amendment site is located within the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Strong Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) area. The Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace area is bounded by Highway 280 to the south, Highway 101 to the east, and Coyote Creek to the west and north. The area is primarily residential with a mixture of single family homes, multi-family dwellings, light industrial uses, and small businesses. There are three significant commercial in this SNI area along East Santa Clara Street, Julian Street and 24th Street. The area also contains some major open space features in local parks along the Coyote Creek.

The intent of the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan is to describe the community's vision for the area, and to set forth recommended policies and actions for realizing the vision. The recommended policies and actions focus on the enhancement of existing neighborhoods, as well as the positive transformation of underutilized lands such as vacant lots and declining industrial areas.

The draft SNI plan for the area considers the amendment site for single-family residential, as well as recommending that the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way be developed with a multi-use trail that would extend the length of the community. The plan also recommends a street connection at the southern boundary of the amendment site between any new development on the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way and the existing neighborhoods to the east and west.

ANALYSIS

Land Use Compatibility/Policy Consistency

The proposed land use change on the subject site is consistent with the General Plan's residential land use policies which call for new development to be compatible with the surrounding existing land uses and neighborhood character. The proposed Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) land use designation matches that of the single-family residential uses to the west. This designation is typified by single-family homes, townhouses and duplexes. The designation is also generally located on the edges of single family neighborhoods, on other infill sites, and in locations where it provides a transition between different land uses.

The existing Union Pacific Railroad tracks are expected to be abandoned in the near future. Other uses allowed by the existing Light Industrial land use designation would not be compatible with the existing single-family residential uses to the west. The proposed residential land use designation is appropriate due to its compatibility with the surrounding single-family neighborhood. In addition, the Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC) land use designation would also serve as an appropriate transition between the single-family neighborhood and the existing light industrial uses, elementary school, and future park to the east.



Looking north at the amendment site towards the northern boundary of E. William Street.

The draft land use plan for the Five Wounds/Brookwood Terrace Neighborhood Improvement Plan shows a multi-use trail that runs the length of the amendment site along the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. The proposed trail is consistent with the General Plan's goal to provide parklands and recreation areas to meet the service needs of community residents. In addition, General Plan Parks and Recreation Policy Number Eight states that the City should consider the conversion of abandoned railroad rights-of-way into multi-purpose trails. For this reason, any residential development on the subject site should not preclude the ultimate development of the trail in an attractive and pedestrian friendly manner.

Citywide Policy Issues

The San Jose 2020 General Plan has seven Major Strategies that identify the principal objectives of the Plan. Of those seven, this amendment directly relates to four of them including Growth Management, Housing, Sustainable City, and Economic Development. The proposed amendment is supportive of the Growth Management Major Strategy that seeks to find the balance between the need to house new population and the need to balance the City's budget, while providing acceptable levels of service. The amendment site is located within an area where urban facilities and services are already available; therefore, any development on this site supports the intent of the Growth Management Major Strategy.

The proposed amendment is also supportive of the Housing Major Strategy that seeks to maximize housing opportunities on infill parcels to which the City already provides municipal services. A change in the land use designation to residential would allow for more housing units on this infill site. The Sustainable City Major Strategy seeks to reduce traffic congestion, pollution, wastefulness, and environmental degradation of our living environment. Development on this infill site provides the opportunity for new housing without requiring the extension of urban services, thereby avoiding urban sprawl. The amendment site is also located in close proximity to a major freeway (Interstate 280) and public transit. Locating development in already urbanized areas and near transit contributes to sustainability by shortening travel distances, helping to conserve energy and reduce air quality impacts.

The proposed land use change is compatible with the surrounding land uses and is consistent with General Plan policies. Therefore, Planning staff recommends approval of the request for Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC). However, any future development of the site should also be consistent with the SNI Plan for the area, including the potential road connection in the southern part of the site and the space needed for the proposed multi-use trail that is to run along the railroad property.

The preservation of industrial land is an important part of achieving the City's Economic Development Goal to provide sufficient opportunities for job growth and for expansion of the City's industrial tax base. Industrial Land Use Policy Number 15 states that exclusively industrial areas should be reserved for industrial uses to the extent possible. If approved, the proposed General Plan amendment would result in the loss of approximately 13 acres of industrial lands and preclude future new development of Light Industrial uses on the site. However, the amendment site is not in an area of exclusively industrial uses. The site is mostly surround by homes and neighborhood serving uses. Given the sites location along the soon to be abandoned Union Pacific Railroad tracks and that the site itself is long and narrow, it would be a difficult place to build new industrial buildings. Therefore, the site lends itself to being a good location for future redevelopment with single-family or multi-family homes that would be more compatible with the existing residential neighborhood and character.

Environmental Issues

The subject site comprises a combination of vacant land and railroad right-of-way. The site is not listed on the California Environmental Protection Agency Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List. However, due to the railroad use on the subject site, a Phase I Environmental Assessment Report was conducted. The Report concluded that there was not any obvious evidence of recognized environmental conditions that could potentially impact the site, with the exception of a monitoring well that was observed. The proposed change in land use to residential would not create any hazards or affect the use of hazardous materials. At the development stage, additional environmental analysis for hazardous materials may be necessary.

The site is located adjacent to Highway 280; therefore, future residential development could be exposed to noise in excess of General Plan noise guidelines. Development on the site would be required to conform to the applicable San Jose 2020 General Plan noise policies. A change in land use to residential use would not create a noise impact.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The property owners within the amendment site boundaries and/or property owners within a 1000-foot radius of the amendment site were sent a newsletter regarding the three community meetings that were held on April 10th, 16th, and 18th 2002. They also received a public hearing notice regarding the public hearings to be held on the subject amendment before the Planning Commission in May and City Council in June. In addition, the community can be kept informed about the status of amendments on the Department's web-site, which contains information on the General Plan process, each proposed amendment, staff reports, and hearing schedule.

During the community meetings, the public expressed concerns that there is not enough park space for the existing residents and that new residents would further impact the situation. Other comments included that a change in land use would help to clean up the area, and that the area already has too much housing.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends Medium Density Residential (8-16 DU/AC).

PBCE002/GP_Team/2002 Annual Review/Staff Reports/Spring Review/GP02-03-03a.doc